



**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**

## **AVIATION DIVISION**

### **ACTIVITIES UPDATE FALL 2001**

- **DIVISION STAFF UPDATE**
- **AVIATION SECURITY IMPACTS POST 9/11 TRAGEDY**
- **DIVISION FUNDING OUTLOOK**
- **FAA AIR-21 FUNDING FOR PAVEMENT MAINTENANCE**
- **LOCAL AIRPORT AID GRANTS TOP HISTORIC LEVELS**
- **AIRPORT AID PROGRAM DEVELOPMENTS**
- **FORECAST AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF AVIATION**
- **SEARCH AND RESCUE UPDATE**
- **FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR AND MECHANIC EDUCATION COURSES**
- **SYSTEM PLAN INVENTORY - SURVEY CREWS TO VISIT  
WASHINGTON AIRPORTS**
- **2002 AVIATION TRADE SHOW**
- **TABLE 1 - FAA Non-Primary Entitlement Funds - AIR-21**
- **TABLE 2 - WSDOT Aviation Grant Awards - State Funds Only**

## **DIVISION STAFF UPDATE**

### **SEARCH STATUS FOR AVIATION DIRECTOR**

WSDOT Chief of Staff, Paula Hammond is leading the search effort for a new director for the Aviation Division. The selection panel, position description and salary review are under development. The section process will follow a similar track used for selecting the WSDOT Ferry Director and the appointment of a new director for aviation is anticipated within 90 days.

### **DIVISION SEEKS AVIATION PROGRAM MANAGER**

Long-time WSDOT Aviation Division employee, Mac McIver announced his retirement in October. Judy Giniger, Aviation Division Acting Director is reviewing the position description and will be leading the selection of an Aviation Program Manager. Appointment of the position is expected within 60 days.

## **AVIATION SECURITY IMPACTS POST 9/11 TRAGEDY**

The Division conducted an email and phone survey of airport sponsors on the economic impacts in Washington State from increased security provisions following the tragedy of September 11<sup>th</sup>. While most airports and tenants in Washington contend with economic losses, those most affected are Part 139 commercial service airports and general aviation airports within the enhanced class B airspace. Since that date, economic losses directly attributed to the new security provisions exceed \$35,000,000. The economic impacts of the enhanced class B airspace restrictions for one fixed based operation may not resonate as significant to the health of our economy but the collective impacts to the multitude of small businesses are great. Fuel sales are at 35-50% percent of normal and many family wage jobs are lost. The Division prepared briefing materials for the Secretary Doug MacDonald's review and communication to the Washington congressional delegation and USDOT Secretary Norm Mineta.

## **DIVISION FUNDING OUTLOOK**

### **REVENUE OUTLOOK DOWN FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE**

With the economy inching its way to a recession, a reduction in discretionary income and the airspace restrictions and operational limitations following the acts of terrorism, general aviation fuel sales are stymied. The Aviation Division including the Local Airport Aid grant program is funded entirely through a fuel excise tax on general aviation fuel sales, aircraft sales tax, pilot registration and aircraft registration. The September 2001 Revenue Forecast prepared by the Department of Licensing projects funding shortfalls at \$750,000 for the 01-03 biennium. Additional declines in revenue are anticipated in the November 2001 Revenue Forecast. Full impacts on fuel sales may not be known for six months as general aviation fuel taxes are generated by fuel distributors.

## **FAA AIR-21 FUNDING FOR PAVEMENT MAINTENANCE**

AIR-21 stands for the *Wendall H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* that reauthorized the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) budget through FY 2003 including the new Non-Primary Entitlement funding for general aviation airports.

For the first time, AIR-21 sets aside grant funds for pavement maintenance at general aviation airports listed in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS.) For Federal Fiscal Year 2001-2002 (October 1, 2000 through September 30, 2002), available funding is based on FAA's partial assessment of general aviation maintenance needs determined in 1998.

In our state, eight smaller general aviation airports have funds set aside for pavement maintenance projects: Chelan, Colfax, Davenport, Hoquiam, Lone, Sunnyside, Toledo, Wilbur. In addition, 18 airports that historically receive federal funds also received AIR-21 funds including Arlington, Auburn, Bremerton, Skagit Regional, Deer Park, Bowers Field, Ephrata, Snohomish County (Paine Field), Kelso-Longview, Olympia, Omak, Prosser, Pierce County – Thun Field, Renton Municipal, Richland, Felts Field, Tacoma Narrows, Pearson Airport. AIR-21 funds for Washington State total \$2,919,310.

The Non-Primary Entitlement funds are specifically for routine work to preserve and extend the useful life of runways, taxiways, and aprons at general aviation airports. Eligible projects include seal coat, joint sealing, fog seal, overlay, patching, marking, cleaning drainage facilities, and fencing. FAA allows state highway specifications for eligible pavement work.

Whitman County Airport in Colfax combined FAA AIR-21 funding with WSDOT Local Airport Aid Funding to complete runway rehabilitation work. The remaining new recipients of federal funds elected to carry their allocation forward to the 2002 construction season. See Table 1 for more detail.

## **LOCAL AIRPORT AID GRANTS TOP HISTORIC LEVELS**

### **LARGEST ALLOCATION OF AIRPORT GRANTS ARE ISSUED IN 2001**

The WSDOT Aviation Division issued grants to local agencies for airport preservation, maintenance and improvement projects at 21 airports through the Local Airport Aid Program totaling \$1.268 million dollars. An additional 16 airport grants were carried over the 99-01 biennium total \$433,000 bringing the overall work efforts for this biennium to \$1.7 million. See Table 2 for grant recipient and grant awards.

## **AIRPORT AID PROGRAM DEVELOPMENTS**

### **CHANGES IN WSDOT LOCAL AIRPORT AID PROGRAM**

As stewards of public funds, the Department is infusing modifications to the Local Airport Aid program to ensure that business procedures and practices are clear to our customers and comply with Washington State law. Under direction of a recent management audit, the Division will revisit program procedures for grant applications and award criteria as well as documentation mechanisms for internal tracking. Areas of change will focus on the use of professional engineering services where required under RCW 18.43, the statute defining Engineering and Land Surveying requirements and bidding and contracting requirements for goods and services by the Division.

Cost effective measures that result in quality projects, meet legal requirements and provide ease in administration for airport sponsors are key goals for the Local Airport Aid program. Near term modifications to the program will require plans and specifications to be reviewed by an engineer. Sources for engineering services include WSDOT engineers, city and county engineers, or consulting private engineers. Division staff and WSDOT engineers along with sponsors and their designated parties will conduct project closeout inspections this fall and the Division will prepare the final inspection report.

The Division, in partnership with the Department will develop state standards and specifications for airport projects in preparation for next construction season. The Division plans to update the Application Guidelines and State Airport

Construction Guidelines and revise the grant application to meet program needs. In addition, the Division will work with sponsors to review the grant award priorities and criteria including the award matrix as presently contained in the Application Guidelines document.

## **FORECAST AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF AVIATION**

### **PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FOR AVIATION FORECAST AND ECONOMIC INPUT/OUTPUT ANALYSIS**

The WSDOT Aviation Division and the Federal Aviation Administration initiated an aviation forecast and economic analysis study to factor the revenue generated on an airport (direct), revenue generated off airport but linked with the facility, e.g. lodging, rental cars (indirect), and the amount the revenue rolls over in a community (induced.) Preliminary analysis found airports and associated factors support 124,473 jobs generating 3,580,455,422 in annual wages. While Seattle-Tacoma International Airport generates a total output of \$9,724,200,000, the remaining airports throughout the system generate over \$115,000,000. Following a review by the study's public advisory committee, Bucher, Willis and Ratliff (study consultants) and the Division will host a public comment period and public outreach through winter.

### **PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FOR RURAL AIRPORT STUDY**

The Washington State Rural Airport Study was commissioned by the Washington State Department of Transportation Aviation Division and conducted by Washington State University to identify the benefits that rural airports bring to their communities. The study design was developed to identify these benefits whether or not their value could be quantified in terms of dollars.

There were recurring themes across communities, albeit expressed differently or with varying emphasis. The feeling was strongly expressed in each community that the airport serving that community was important today and is a critical part of that community's future. Elected officials in each area independently volunteered that the airports in their communities are part of the basic infrastructure that is required for the health, welfare, safety, and economic well being of the residents living in their communities, conclusions that are supported by this study.

Airports are in several cases, a symbol of hope for rural communities fighting for their economic life. It is impossible to quantify the value of these benefits yet they are real, even if not recognized, to the people who live and work in rural communities. A draft report will be out for public comment through November and December 2001. The final report will support arguments to continue AIR-21 non-primary entitlement funding as Congress takes up reauthorization.

## **SEARCH AND RESCUE UPDATE**

Undaunted by the events in September, the general aviation community managed to proceed with the 2001 Mountain Flying Clinic in Wenatchee, Washington. The rescheduled October event hosted many seminar attendees of and 30 pilots were fortunate to fly during the event. The course is intended to increase and refresh knowledge and skills when flying in high mountain country. State pilot registration and registered aircraft are mandatory for participation.

The 2001 Pilots Guide is rolling off the presses and should find its way to the mailboxes of registered pilots by the close of 2001.

Renewal efforts are underway for Air Search and Rescue (SAR) cardholders. Air SAR cards are issued for a two-year period and expire after 24 months. Interested volunteers with expiring cards should request a renewal form from the Division. Current Air SAR cards enable volunteers to participate in an actual search.

## **FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR AND MECHANIC EDUCATION COURSES**

### **FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR REFRESHER COURSES**

Flight Instructor Refresher Courses continue on schedule with the next FIRC two-day class set for November 17th and 18th in Seattle with 90 certified flight instructors registered to attend. Hoffman Pilot Center, Inc. will be teaching the course.

### **MECHANICS REFRESHER COURSES**

The Division will host two Aviation Mechanics Refresher courses in March 2002 with one course offered in eastern Washington and the other in western Washington.

## **SYSTEM PLAN INVENTORY – SURVEY CREWS TO VISIT AIRPORTS**

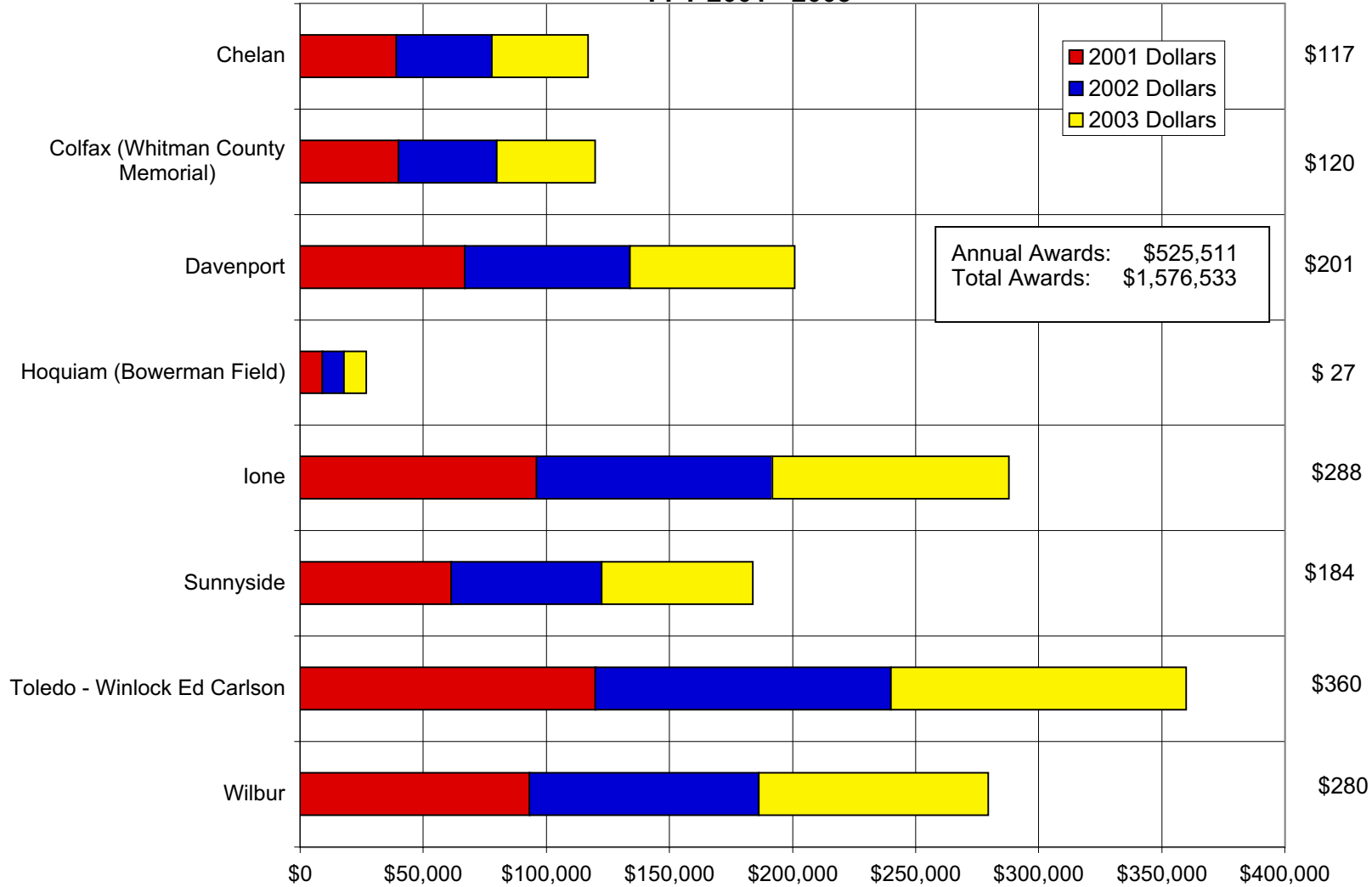
An inventory update of the 1998 Aviation System Plan is on the roll and will run through September 2002. The update documents the current condition of each airport facility in the system and involves two key work elements: physical facility inventory and airport management interviews. Survey crews and engineers from W & H Pacific will visit 91 airports in Washington collecting data, surveying accurate runway end coordinates for obstructions evaluations and approaches, and preparing FAA Form 5010 inspections as well as updating CAD drawings for the airports. Study announcements to airports will be out mid-November.

## **2002 NORTHWEST AVIATION CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW**

Mark your calendar for February 23 – 24, 2002 for the Northwest Aviation Conference and Trade Show at the Puyallup Fair Grounds. The show will include booths showcasing aviation related products and services as well as informative seminars and the ever-popular Aviation Hall of Fame Banquet.

**FAA Non-Primary Entitlement Funds - AIR-21  
FFY 2001 - 2003**

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**Table 1**

